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## **Robin Williams-Hawks To Head New Garfield Park Arts Center**

**INDIANAPOLIS** — Robin Williams-Hawks, a former executive director of the Indianapolis Philharmonic Orchestra, was recently named manager of the new Garfield Park Arts Center. The Arts Center, located at 2432 Conservatory Drive, is one of the last in a series of capital projects funded through a \$10 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., awarded to Indy Parks and Recreation in 2001.

Hawks arrives as the extensive renovation of the century-old Garfield Park Family Shelter House into the new Arts Center nears completion. The facility will be home to Indy Parks and Recreation's Arts Services department and will give local residents of all ages and abilities the opportunity to learn, experience and enjoy all mediums of art.

"Robin's extensive background in arts education and her ability to create excitement for the arts makes her a valued asset to Indy Parks as we move to make programming more accessible to communities on the south side of Indianapolis," said Director Joseph Wynns.

A professional cellist, visual artist and arts administrator, Hawks came to Indianapolis from New Orleans in 1998 to become the Executive Director of the Indianapolis Philharmonic Orchestra. During her tenure at the Philharmonic, she developed many community outreach initiatives, including a summer music program for Indianapolis Public School youth called *Strings & Jazzy Things*.

In 2000, Hawks was appointed Director of Arts Education for the non-for-profit agency AYS, Inc., where she successfully implemented music and arts programming for children. Hawks' innovative work has garnered her awards and honors, including being named the *2004 Outstanding School Age Professional* by the Indiana School Age Consortium. In 2003, AYS' Multicultural Arts program designed by Hawks was nominated for the *Mayor's Celebration of Diversity Awards*, as well as the Presidential Committee on the Arts & Humanities *Coming Up Taller Awards*.

*NUVO* deemed Hawks as "New Orleans' Cultural Ambassador to Indianapolis" in the fall of 2005. The magazine recognized her creation of the annual "Mardi Gras Mambo" Parade in the Mass Avenue Arts & Theater district for the last five years, as well as the recent GUMBO AID concerts she spearheaded to raise money for Hurricane Katrina relief.

As manager, Hawks will oversee the completion of renovations as well as the development of arts programs for the new Arts Center. She plans to use her diverse experience and skills in both arts education and performing and visual arts production in her new position at Garfield Park.

"I would like to see the Garfield Park Arts Center become an 'epicenter' for arts education for both youth and adults, offering diverse performance and visual arts opportunities," said Hawks. "The arts center has the potential to become a dynamic destination our community to celebrate all aspects of the arts."



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Beginning in early 2006, the arts center will host several preview events to showcase local artists and the newly renovated space. The Garfield Park Arts Center's official grand opening celebration is charted for late spring 2006.

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